

REMARKS:

Reconsideration of the rejections is respectfully requested.

The status of the claims is as follows:

Amended:	None
Cancelled:	1-11
Previously Cancelled:	None
New:	1230
Pending:	None
Allowed:	None

The claim fee status is as recited in an enclosed fee transmittal.

The claims have been revised to more clearly define the invention. Support for the amendments is either apparent, or is as described in the text below.

Claim Objections

The objected-to multiple dependent claims have been amended to comport with MPEP §608.01(n).

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

Claims 1-5 and 8-10 stood rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, based on an assertion that certain terms in the claim rendered the claims insufficient to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that the applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As should be clear from the specification, for example the text at pages 8-9, the method and installation of the invention uses two absorbent materials. The first adsorbs water, and the second adsorbs extract compounds.

The other objection stated under this rejection questions how various means can have effects in the impregnation enclosure yet be downstream of the enclosure. The prior claim recited that the means were downstream of the extractor, a separate element. Hence, this aspect of the rejection was in error.

In light of the above discussion, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-5, 8 and 9 stood rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), based on an assertion of obviousness over McCaffrey, US 4,460,476 in view of Tan, US 5,160,044. Applicant respectfully traverses.

McCaffrey discloses a process for separating water from organic solvents by percolating the mixture through a column packed with a dehydrated molecular sieve, and possibly regenerating such molecular sieve bed by percolating a hot gas.

Tan relates to a process using a supercritical or near-critical fluid for extracting an organic liquid (ethanol) from a an aqueous mixture, by combination with a selective membrane.

As to prior claim 1 and current claim 12, McCaffrey does not disclose or suggest releasing the pressure prior to a separate adsorption step, the second adsorption step, or vaporizing the solvent. As to prior claim 8 and current claim 25, McCaffrey does not disclose or suggest a separate impregnation enclosure with a heater adapted to release gas from the solvent or a porous medium selected to adsorb extract. Tan does not provide these teachings. Moreover, nothing in the art suggests that combining McCaffrey and Tan would effect better separation. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 10 stood rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), based on an assertion of obviousness over McCaffrey, in view of Tan, DeFilippi (US 4,349,415) and Moses (US 4,877,530).

DeFilippi relates to a process using a supercritical or near-critical fluid for extracting an organic liquid from a liquid mixture, by a method especially designed to cut energy consumption. Moses (US 4,877,530) relates to the separation of an organic liquid from an aqueous mixture using a supercritical fluid consisting in a mixture of carbon dioxide and a co-solvent. Nothing in this art suggests that it would be desirable to use a fractionating column operating in counter-flow, adapted for the treatment of liquid raw materials, to serve as the extractor in the method and installation of the current claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection should be withdrawn.

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Conclusion

In light of the above discussion and amendments, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.²

Respectfully submitted,



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